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LS 152L.01: Introduction to the Humanities

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INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES
Liberal Studies 152, Summer, 2003
MTWRF 12:30-2:00 pm

Dr. Dan Spencer
JRH102, Tel. 243-6111
Office Hours:
2-3 pm Mon-Thur or by appointment
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COURSE STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES

This course has several goals. Most broadly it is designed to introduce the student to the study of the humanities as an important component of a liberal arts education through a focus on selective texts from the Medieval to the Modern periods that have shaped Western civilization. We will explore the formation and transformation of some western world views and themes, and reflect on how they have shaped and influenced society and culture today. The emphases of the course are engaging in close readings of the primary texts, discussing and writing about those texts.

“A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say. A classic is something that tends to relegate the concerns of the moment to the status of background noise, but at the same time this background noise is something we cannot do without. (Conversely) A classic is something that persists as a background noise even when the most incompatible momentary concerns are in control of the situation.”

• Italo Calvino

“Classics are certain texts, events, images, rituals, symbols and persons (in which we acknowledge) a disclosure of a reality we cannot but name truth... some disclosures of reality in a moment of ‘recognition’ which surprises, provokes, challenges, shocks, and eventually transforms us; an experience that upsets conventional opinions and expands the sense of the possible; indeed a realized experience of that which is essential, that which endures – the presence of classics in every culture is undeniable. Their memory haunts us. Their actual effects in our lives endure and await ever new appropriations, constantly new interpretations.”

• David Tracy

REQUIRED TEXTS

Dante, The Portable Dante (Penguin: Musa trans.)
More, Utopia (Penguin)
Descartes, Discourse on Method (Library of Liberal Arts)
Shakespeare, The Tempest (Penguin)
Shelley, Frankenstein (Bantam Classic)
Dostoevsky, The Grand Inquisitor (Hackett Press)
Freud, Civilization and its Discontents (Norton, The Standard Edition)
Silko, Ceremony
Fac Pac of readings

REQUIREMENTS

- Regular class attendance and participation that demonstrates a grasp of the reading assignments
- Regular short written responses to the readings
- Essay on a theme from the texts
- Written final exam

ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

<u>Class</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Week One:				
6/30	M	1	Introduction: Laying out themes and structure of the course Introduction to the Medieval World of Europe	
7/1	T	2	Dante's <i>Divine Comedy: Inferno</i>	Cantos I-V, X-XI, XIII-XVI
7/2	W	3	Dante's <i>Divine Comedy: Inferno</i>	Cantos XVIII-XIV, XXI-XXII, XXVI-XXVIII, XXXII, XXXIV
7/3	R	4	Dante's <i>Divine Comedy: Purgatorio and Paradiso</i> <i>First Response Paper due</i>	<i>Purgatorio</i> Cantos I-II, IX-X, XXVII, XXX-XXXIII <i>Paradiso</i> Cantos I, XXIX-XXXIII
7/4	F		NO CLASS: 4TH OF JULY	
Week Two:				
7/7	M	5	Christine de Pisan: Selections from "The Book of the City of Ladies" Pico: "Oration on the Dignity of Man"	FP #1 FP #2
7/8	T	6	Erasmus: Selections from "The Praise of Folly" Martin Luther: "The Freedom of a Christian"	FP #3 FP #4
			<i>Second Response Paper due</i>	
7/9	W	7	Thomas More: <i>Utopia</i>	Book I
7/10	R	8	Thomas More: <i>Utopia</i>	Book II
7/11	F	9	Shakespeare: <i>The Tempest</i> <i>Third Response Paper due</i>	Intro, Acts I-II
Week Three:				
7/14	M	10	Shakespeare: <i>The Tempest</i>	Acts III-V
7/15	T	11	Descartes: <i>Discourse on Method</i> <i>Fourth Response Paper due</i>	Intro and Part One
7/16	W	12	Descartes: <i>Discourse on Method</i> (you may skim pp. 7-11, 26-35, 44-45, 48-50)	Parts 2-6
7/17	R	13	Immanuel Kant: "What is Enlightenment?" Mary Wollstonecraft: "Vindication of the Rights of Women"	FP #5 FP #6

7/18 F 14 Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* Chapters 1-12 (pp. 1-100)

Fifth Response Paper due

Hand out Instructions for Major Paper

Week Four:

7/21 M 15 Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* Chapters 13-24 (pp. 101-206)

7/22 T 16 Romantic Poets: William Wordsworth, and William Blake FP #7 & 8

7/23 W 17 Karl Marx: Selections from writings FP #9

7/24 R 18 Fyodor Dostoevsky: "The Grand Inquisitor" 1-37

7/25 F 19 Sigmund Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents* 10-52

Major Paper due

Week Five:

7/28 M 20 Sigmund Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents* 53-112

7/29 T 21 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

7/30 W 22 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

7/31 R 23 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* and Wrap-up

8/1 F 24 *Final Exam*

GRADING POLICY

1. Five Short Response Papers to the Readings: 50%
2. Paper: 25%
3. Final exam: 25%

Note Re Papers: Papers are due in class on or before the date listed in the syllabus. Unless you have made a prior agreement with me, I will take off one grade level (A becomes A-) for each class day an assignment is late. Papers with an undue number of errors of punctuation, spelling, or grammar will be returned ungraded for correction. Written work will be evaluated in terms of your depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, clarity of writing, and ability to address issues raised in the text and in class on the topic at hand. Grades given reflect the following criteria of judgment:

- F: Failure to meet minimum requirements
- D: Unsatisfactory, but some effort to meet minimum requirements
- C: Satisfactory; meet minimum requirements of assignment but not much more
- B: Good to Very Good: thoughtful reflection, good analysis, clear writing style
- A: Excellent depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, and writing style; demonstrate creativity and mature analytical skills in going beyond the primary requirements of the assignment

Attendance: Regular attendance and participation in the class is expected. More than **two** (2) absences will result in losing any benefit of the doubt on your final grade. More than **four** (4) absences will result in one grade reduction. More than **seven** (7) absences will result in a failing course grade. Late arrivals in class will count as an absence. (**Note:** If you have a valid reason for missing several classes, such as illness or other conflicting commitments, you still **must** speak with the instructor).

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism: All work submitted is expected to be the student's own. Any acts of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure of the course, and may result in further academic punishment. If you have any doubts about definitions of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please review the relevant sections of the University Catalog (p. 22).

DESCRIPTION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. Five Bi-Weekly Short Response Papers to the Readings: choose **one** of the assigned readings that week for a short, typed two-three page critical response. After reading the text, write (1) a clear exposition of the reading (i.e., three or four paragraphs that summarize and explain the main points of the reading), (2) two or three paragraphs giving your thoughtful response and discussion of the main issues in the reading. The papers will be graded on a scale of 0 to 20 points. The cumulative score of these responses is a significant element in determining your final grade; they indicate to me the consistency and quality of your participation in the course.

2. Essay: A 5-6 page typed essay in which you consider a theme, key term, or other consideration(s) from the texts we read from the first three weeks of the course. Use the text to support a well-constructed argument for the theme which you decide to pursue. We will discuss paper topics in class at least one week prior to the due date of **Friday, July 25th** (in class).

3. Final Exam: The final will cover material from the entire course and will ask you to integrate your learning from across the semester. **Friday, August 1.**

Note: All written assignments are due in class no later than **Friday, August 1.** There will be no extensions for written work granted beyond this date.

P/NP Grade option: A minimum grade average of C- (70) is required for a P grade in the P/NP Grade option.

Incomplete Grade: Please see the criteria that must be met for an Incomplete on p. 21 of the University Catalog. No exceptions will be made for these criteria.